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THE
VIRGINIA
EVANGELICAL AND LITERARY
MAGAZINE.

VOL. I.

SEPTEMBER, 1818.

No. IX.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF SCRIPTURE.—No. II.

THE first chapter of Genesis contains a brief account of the creation. In the second, besides the institution of the sabbath, there is a *recapitulation* of the events before related, with the addition of several particulars not before mentioned. This remark is made for the purpose of obviating, what some have thought to be a difficulty ; namely, that the work of creation is said to have been completed in six days ; yet, afterwards, an account is given of the formation of woman. The difficulty however vanishes at once, if this part of the sacred narrative is regarded as recapitulary and supplemental.

Respecting the sabbath, we shall defer the remarks that we have to offer until another occasion. And we shall not amuse our readers, with any speculations or conjectures concerning the geography of Paradise.

Our present purpose is to attempt, at least, a brief illustration of the doctrine of Scripture relative to the original state of man. And here we ask our readers to peruse Gen. I. 26 — 31. and the whole of the second chapter. On this passage we offer the following remarks, pursuing the order that seems to us most easy and natural.

1. Man came out of the hands of his Creator perfect and entire. By the use of these two words, we mean to say that he was formed in the maturity of his powers ; of full size, and strength ; with the use of speech ; and in the perfect exercise of reason, and every other faculty suited to his condition. The narrative of the historian supports this remark. Only attend to the 19th and 20th verses of the second chapter. “ And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them to Adam

to see what he would call them ; and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field : but for Adam, there was not found a help meet for him.” Unless the state of man had been such as we have represented, how could he give names to the animals that were made to pass before him, according to the nature of each individual?

And here it may be observed that we have a plain account of the origin of language ; a subject which has often puzzled the philosophers. Their strange, and sometimes ridiculous, theories shall not now be noticed. God, with his other gifts, bestowed language on man, and thus adapted him to the condition in which he was placed. What the primitive language was, it is useless to enquire. Perhaps, however, the *Hebrew* has as good a claim to that honour as any other.

2. We, in the next place, notice the existence of the social principle in man. God caused the various animals, according to their kinds, to pass before Adam, on the day of his creation. Among themselves they found their mates ; and, by inarticulate sounds, expressed the delight enjoyed in their new and happy existence—But between them and Adam, there existed no sympathies ; he could feel for them no social affection ; they answered to no call from him. He was alone in the world. God saw that this was not good for man. Formed as he was, he could not be happy in this state of solitude. And, doubtless, one object of the Creator, in causing the various animals to pass before Adam was, to let him feel that he wanted a help-meet. The want is no sooner recognized, than the Almighty in the exercise of his all-creative power, formed, of a part of man, one, who bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, was intended to be united to him in all his joys, and instrumental in the completion of his felicity. We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of quoting the beautiful representation of this subject, given by the greatest of all the poets. Milton makes Adam say,

Each bird and beast, behold,
Approaching two and two, these cowring low
With blandishment ; each bird stooped on his wing.
I named them as they passed, and understood
Their nature ; with such knowledge God endued
My sudden apprehension—But in these
I found not what methought I wanted still.

But in relation to the last work of the creation, he says,

Under his forming hand a creature grew,
Man-like, but different sex, so lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed now
Mean—or in her summed up, in her contained
And in her looks; which from that time infused
Sweetness into my heart unfelt before.

And again,

On she came

Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites;
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

Man was formed for domestic society; and in the very beginning, marriage was instituted and blessed by God. How pure the love, how delightful the intercourse subsisting between our first parents, when no guilt poisoned their joys, no jarring passion interrupted their felicity!

3. In the original state of man, we are particularly called on to consider his formation in the *image*, and after the *likeness* of his Creator. Reason might teach us that man was not created that cold-hearted, selfish, proud, ambitious, cruel, covetous, ungodly being, that he now is; but reason can give us no *distinct* information respecting his real condition. The book of revelation assures us, that man's primitive state was one of high moral excellence.—We are sure that there could be no resemblance between man's external appearance, and the Deity. For what similitude can matter bear to mind? The likeness must be sought in the intellectual and moral endowments of man. Accordingly we find the inspired writers expressing themselves thus Ecc. vii. 29, “God made man *upright*; but he has sought out many inventions. 2 Cor. iii. 18. But we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same *image*, from glory to glory, even as by the spirit of the Lord. 2 Cor. iv. 4, Lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the *image of God*, should shine unto them. Eph. iv. 24, And that ye put on the new man, which, after God, is created in *righteousness and true holiness*. Col. iii. 10 And have put on the new man, *which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him.*” From these passages of scripture, we see the correctness of the answer, in the Assembly's catechism, to the question, “In what estate did God create

man?" "God created man, male and female, after his own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures." In this state of perfection, the law of God was written on the heart of man; reason and conscience directed all his other powers; and he found complete felicity in the service and enjoyment of God. The narrative of Moses seems to imply an intimacy of intercourse, a closeness of communion between man and his Creator, which, while it gives delightful views of the condescension of the Almighty, at the same time enlarges our ideas of the dignity, glory and happiness of man.

4. But to have a complete view of man's excellence, it is necessary to consider another particular mentioned in the history of his creation. We learn that God, after having formed the human body out of the dust of the earth, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, [Heb. lives,] and man became a *living soul*." There is something remarkable in this expression. To all animals God gave life; but into man he breathed a portion of his own spirit; and thus endowed him with immortality. That this is the proper import of these words, is the general opinion of commentators, and we are referred for confirmation, to the following passages. Num. xvi. 22. "And they fell upon their faces and said, O! God, *the God of the spirits of all flesh*." Num. xxvii. 16. "Let Jehovah, *the God of the spirits of all flesh*, set a man over the congregation." Ecc. xii. 7. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." Zech. xiii. 1. "The Lord—that formeth the spirit of man within him." Matt. x. 28. "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul," &c.

Whether this interpretation is sustained by these, and similar passages, or not; it is clearly taught in scripture that man was created immortal; and of course, the consideration of his immortality ought to enter into our enquiries respecting his original condition.

Here, then, we see man in the perfection of his powers; endowed with an understanding darkened by no error; with a heart polluted by no corrupt passion; with a conscience faithfully announcing the law of God; with a living soul of which the high attribute is immortality; united in dearest connection with one of his own species; holding all other creatures in subjection to his authority; while he owns allegiance to the king of heaven, pays him the homage of the whole heart, and enjoys delightful intercourse with him. Every thing subserves his happiness; and all nature sheds on him its kindliest,

its selectest influence. What a contrast to man in his present condition!

5. There is another very interesting point of view, in which we are to regard the first man. *He was the representative of his posterity.* Unless we advert to this fact, many things occurring in scripture, as well as in the present condition of the human family, will appear strange and unintelligible.

It can scarcely have escaped the observation of any one, that universally the character, and circumstances of children are greatly affected by those of their parents. The children of a poor man are brought up in poverty; a diseased parent has sickly children; the dissipated, immoral, and intemperate have descendants like themselves. These remarks are so obvious, and so supported by experience and observation, that common sentiment identifies the character and reputation of parents and children. It is useless to say that this is a prejudice. The very disclaimer against it, feels that which he affects to condemn, and acts according to that which he pretends to renounce. Who, for instance, would choose to marry the son or daughter, however amiable, of a penitentiary convict?

On looking back to the origin of the human race, with the scripture for our guide, we shall be able to account for this well established fact. It is part of the primitive constitution; of the appointment of the Almighty, when Adam was made the federal head and representative of the human family. In the sacred record we find, that man was not only created with the moral law written on his heart; and placed under the obligation to perform all the duties resulting from his relation to the Creator; but that a test of obedience was instituted, and a positive command superadded. Gen. ii. 16, 17, “And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” On Adam’s observance of this precept, depended his own well-being, and that of his posterity. The account given by Moses of this matter is very brief. Doubtless it answered the purpose had in view by him. We ought, however, to search for all the light thrown on this interesting subject, any where in that volume, the whole of which was dictated by one and the same Spirit. In the epistle to the Romans v. 12—19, we have the fullest account of this matter. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned; (for until the law sin was in the world—but sin is not imputed when there

is no law : nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come --But not as the offence so also is the free gift : for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God and the gift by grace, which is by one man Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so also is the gift ; for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one ; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one Jesus Christ :) therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation ; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners ; so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous." This passage is decisive on the subject.—We all die in Adam. It was through his transgression that sin entered into the world ; and death by sin. We must either admit this or deny the truth of scripture. But if this is true, the converse is also true. Had not Adam sinned, and incurred the penalty of death, none of his posterity would have been liable to fall. For it cannot be imagined that Adam's posterity would have been so connected with him, as to have suffered all the ruinous consequences of his apostacy ; and yet have enjoyed none of the benefits of his obedience.

This then seems to have been the case with Adam. God entered into a covenant with him, or it was the original appointment of the Almighty, that should he obey the commandment, he and all his posterity should be confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness ; but should he disobey, he and all his posterity should be delivered over to a state of sin and misery. He was put on trial, then, as the representative of his posterity. The sad result of this trial has been the occasion of much cavil. But let us suppose that man, in the proper use of his powers, had continued upright ; who then would have found fault ? Who would not, rather, have admired the wisdom and goodness of God in the covenant of works ? The case must have been as we have stated ; that is, Adam must, for a short time previous to the birth of any of his children, have been put on trial as the representative, and federal head of his race ; or each individual must have stood the trial for himself. Now, it seems to us that the former scheme has more of goodness, and we will say, of security than the latter. For, 1. Adam was created in the image of God, a perfect man, with all his

faculties mature, and fully instructed by his Maker in the various duties incumbent on him. But those who by ordinary generation descend from him, are, in the first period of life, infants, with nothing but capacities of learning. Of course they must, for the time, be subjected to discipline to bring their minds to maturity. During this state of imbecility, they are exposed to the wiles of the temper, and are more liable to be overcome than the mature man. Every individual, then, in the whole series of generations, would have been less able to resist temptation, that is more likely to fall, than Adam.

2. Adam was the only man, and Eve the only woman in the world during this probation. There was less opportunity, then, for the Tempter to work on human nature, than there would be, when the world should be filled with inhabitants.

3. Adam knew that he was under trial for himself and for his posterity. But in the other case, each individual would have sustained the probation for himself alone. Adam's motive to resist the temptation was of course much stronger, than that of any private individual could be. On the whole, the situation of Adam was better for retaining his purity, than that of any of descendants. Of course the constitution which made him the representative of his posterity was one of goodness, we had almost said of mercy.

We do not see how these conclusions can be avoided, unless it be denied that God had a right to put his creatures in a state of trial at all; which seems to us to be the same thing with denying that he had a right to create such a being as man, or any other moral agent. For the very idea of moral agency implies *liberty of action*. This enters into all our ideas of praise and blame. Man then must have been free to choose, that is liable to fall, and of course to incur guilt. And this must have been perpetually the case, had not God by a gracious covenant determined that on man's sustaining the trial, he should be confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness. "But why did not God prevent the fall of man?" This is equivalent to asking, why did not God put man on a trial, which should be no trial at all?

In conformity to the constitution here exhibited, God instituted, as we have before remarked, a test of obedience. [See v. 17. before quoted.] This has been a copious theme for the profane ridicule of ungodly men. But let us with humble and serious minds examine this subject. We observe then 1. That God had a right to institute a test of obedience; and his goodness and wisdom in the institution have been before noticed. 2. External objects make a deep impression on beings, whose

senses are the organs through which so much is communicated to them.

3. The effect of external objects depends almost entirely on the ideas associated with them.

4. Adam was in the garden of Eden, the fruits of which afforded his sole subsistence.

5. The only human relation that he then sustained was that of husband ; his only social duty was to love and cherish his wife. Many of the affections of the human heart could not, in those circumstances, be called into exercise. There was scarcely any scope for the passions. Adam could hardly, then, be subjected to any test of obedience, unless to a positive command in relation to some external object.

Our ideas on this subject may be enlarged by attending to the positive institutions of the christian church. What is more common than the application, in various ways, of water to the human body ; or, than eating bread and drinking wine ? These substances as daily used, excite no particular attention, create no powerful emotion. Yet, when employed as emblems of the sanctifying Spirit ; and of the broken body and shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, their trivial use is forgotten ; they produce ideas of the deepest solemnity ; and call forth the holiest feelings of the heart. Every one is conscious of very different emotions, when he sees one wash his face ; and when in the church of God and before high heaven, the water of baptism is applied, with invocation of the most holy Trinity, to a member of the visible church of Jesus Christ. And, likewise, there is a very great difference between seeing a man eat bread for food, or drink wine for refreshment ; and a communicant, bending at the table of the Lord over the consecrated elements, and partaking of them as memorials of the passion and death of our great Redeemer. During the celebration of this solemn ordinance, even the infidel looks on with awe, and owns the power of devotion. Who dares to scoff, when the humble christian, mingling repentance, on account of past sins, with strong confidence in the divine mercy, full purposes of sincere obedience, and the hopes of a blessed immortality, celebrates the love of the Saviour of sinners ? Now why might not Adam, who lived on the fruits of Eden, associate, with the tree of knowledge, the gracious covenant of his Maker, the hope of a happy immortality, the dread prohibition of the Almighty, the awful penalty contained in the mysterious denunciation “thou shalt surely die,” and in a word all those revealed truths in which the best interests of himself and of his posterity were involved ? Why might he not regard this instituted test of obedience with as deep feelings as those with which the christian

regards the bread and wine, when set apart for the Lord's supper? The sneers of infidels on this subject, betray ignorance of the nature of man, and want of the pious affections, that constitute at once the best enjoyment, and the highest dignity of human nature.

Concerning the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the tree of life, fanciful men have indulged in conjectures, which strikingly show the folly of being wise above what is written. The tree of knowledge might have had deleterious juices, and the tree of life might have been endued with salutiferous qualities. And, for what we know, the only distinction between them and other trees, might have been in their situation and appointed uses. It is common water, that we use in baptism; and common bread and wine, in the other sacrament. All we know about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil is, that it was an instituted test of obedience, intended for our first parents alone, as representatives of the human family. And as for the tree of life, the only rational opinion is, that it was a sacramental pledge of obedience; in like manner as the bread and wine of the Lord's supper, afford a sign, seal, or pledge of the pardoning mercy of God through Jesus Christ.

Some writers, perhaps for want of that fortitude of understanding which the investigation of religious truth requires, have represented this whole matter as an allegory. But Moses does not give the most distant hint of this; and every allusion to this history in other parts of the Bible, seems to recognize it as a narrative of what really happened. We should as soon imagine that the history of the institution of the Lord's supper is an allegory. It is too much the fashion of the day to make any part of scripture, which does not suit our prejudices, or easily bend to our passions "*entirely figurative.*" In this way the very fundamental principles of divine truth are unsettled; and man is left to wander in pathless wilds of conjecture. One is here reminded of the saying of an eccentric, but very pious preacher on this subject. "These men would make the Bible a figure; Christ, a figurative saviour; the law, a figurative law; the Gospel, a figurative gospel—It would be well for them, if hell were also a figure. But if all these things are solemn realities, what a figure will they make, when lifting up their eyes in torment?"—The truth is just this, that every passage of scripture is to be interpreted, in its plain, natural import; unless something in the passage clearly directs us to a different mode of interpretation.

In conclusion, we remark that the views which we have taken of the original state of man are calculated to impress deeply on the heart the goodness and condescension of the

Almighty. That covenant, the violation of which, "brought death into this world, and all our woe," was suited to the nature of man; illustrated the perfections of Deity; and now shows how inexcusable and enormous is the apostacy of our species.

For the Virginia Evangelical and Literary Magazine.

ON READING TO EXCESS.

We bookish men are frequently complaining that the spirit of reading is too low among our neighbours, and trying to prevail with them to improve their minds and hearts by the use of good books. We expatiate upon the evils of ignorance, the baseness of neglecting attainable and important information, and the exquisite pleasures as well as high benefits, which well-chosen literature affords to its votaries. All this is very proper. We sometimes gain a proselyte; who never fails to thank us for his conversion from mental torpor, to enquiries and pursuits worthy of a rational being. I hope we shall go on repeating our remonstrances and persuasions on this subject, as long as we can see that they are wanted, and as often as we have any, even the least prospect of success. Next to the gaining of a soul from the dominion of sin, it is delicious to thin the ranks of intellectual darkness and stupidity.

But let it be remembered, in the mean time, that there is an opposite extreme, into which we are liable to ramble, namely that of reading too much. This takes place, when we lose sight of the main ends of reading; such as refreshing the mind for vigorous exertion, furnishing it with materials for reflection, or enlarging its stock of knowledge with a view to beneficial practice; and sit gaping over our books, day after day and week after week, without any other aim than that of present gratification. To one who loves reading, and who has a large library at hand, the temptation to sink gradually into this state is by no means a trifle.—Whether the inveterate book-worm, or whether the voluntary clodpole be the more pitiable character; or in a moral view the more culpable, I shall not undertake to determine. My purpose is to point out, by way of warning, the principal evils which result from the habit of reading to excess. I wish my own experience were less than it is, in regard to the truth of what I have to say on this habit.

In the first place, it impairs the health of the body, by

exchanging that exercise which ought to be taken in the open air for the confinement and stagnation of a chamber. I have read indeed something of the peripatetic students and philosophers in days of yore, who pursued their meditations walking about a grove, or garden, or some such place. But we manage the matter notoriously otherwise in Virginia. Having seized the volume, we do not merely become sedentary while we read : the feet are immediately elevated to the window frame, or the arch of the fireplace, so that our lower extremities make hardly so much as a right angle with the chest. In this ensnaring and mischevious position we remain, while hour after hour passes unheeded away. This produces, by and by, diminution of appetite, debilitation of the digestive organs, growing langour of the whole frame, and a crew of tormenting nervous disorders much more easily contracted than either described or removed. I am no physician to trace the miserable process accurately ; but I know that while we live in these animal bodies, we must take some care of their welfare, or they will sink into a swamp of disease, and drag us along with them. And what is a man good for, or what can he enjoy, when his health is gone? Friends have kindly admonished me to read standing up ; but I shall not do it, if I can find any tolerable thing on which to sit down. No ; the proper course is to fling the volume aside after a moderate session, rush out of the house, and walk, run, ride, or work a while, under the wide, blue canopy of heaven.

Next, I say that excessive reading weakens the mind ; or at least prevents the advancement of its strength. The truth of this observation might be inferred from the last ; for such are the connexions and dependencies of things in the human system, that the immaterial part is not likely to "discourse sweet music" while the material is much out of tune. But I intend to support the assertion on additional and still more decisive ground. If the book-worm spends too much of his time in profound and difficult studies, such as Locke's *Essay*, Butler's *Analogy*, or the *Night Thoughts* of Dr. Young ; such intense labour, combined with the want of corporeal motion, must rapidly injure both the body and the mind. Or if, which oftener happens, he limit himself to easier reading, the mind will languish for lack of exercise. If you would improve, or even preserve the vigour either of body or mind, it must be done by appropriate action. I am not alluding here to the thousands of dull, shallow books which have more of the soporific quality than of any other : I speak of history, travels, poetry, in their brightest forms ; and indeed the entire circle of what is called polite literature.

In all these things the mind of the reader is extremely passive; much more so than any reader will be apt to imagine, who has not made careful observations upon himself. We read on with ease, and are pleased with the succession of facts and images presented to our view. We go on devouring volume after volume, the main powers of the soul lying all the while dormant; until at length any such exertion as deserves the name of thinking becomes a strange and very irksome employment. If it comes in our way, such a habit of indolence has seized us that we fly with alarm from the face of labour, and return to the downy couch of sloth and inactivity. *Probatum est.*

Again; excessive reading diminishes the quantity which might be acquired of genuine and useful knowledge. Suppose a man should keep himself continually stuffed to the brim with food, what must be the consequence? The food may be good in itself; but what mortal stomach can dispose of such a load? It will bring on disease far overbalancing the low gratifications of gluttony. Very similar is the case of the gormandizer of books. He may lay in good materials; but he carries on no process of intellectual digestion. The furniture of his mind, therefore, remains all in a chaotic state of confusion, "*rudis indigestaque moles,*" and turns to no valuable account. It is ~~not~~ a sort of vexatious amusement to converse with a scholar of this class. He gives you half-ideas and quarter-reasonings about a great many things; but useful and accurate information about nothing. Besides, much of that kind of knowledge which is of prime interest to the conduct and comfort of life, is such as cannot be learned to any tolerable perfection from books alone. For instance, study Locke, and Read, and Samuel Johnson, upon human nature. Study them attentively. But then go and mingle with mankind; observe with your own eyes the varieties of character, and the ways in which the passions operate; you will discover a thousand important things which these mighty philosophers never told you. The truth is, one may be an adept in the best metaphysical speculations, and at the same time little better than a simpleton in the practical science of man.

Farther; I am constrained to denounce this excessive spirit of reading as a very selfish propensity; and if this be correct, it merits no slight degree of censure. What do we mean by a selfish man? Is it not one who devotes himself to his own personal gratification, of whatever kind it may be? I will by no means place the bookworm, unless the very matter of his reading be wicked and abominable, upon the same level of

degradation with the sluggard, the sensualist, the gambler, or the miser ; but as to the hateful characteristic of absorption in self, his principle is certainly the same with theirs. He is indulging an extravagant luxury of his own. He pursues with an enormous and constantly growing passion, a pleasure of the most unsocial kind imaginable. It ought to be remarked too, that the very solitude of this sort of voluptuary, his abstraction from society, tends powerfully to freeze the springs of benevolence in the heart. If we would preserve and invigorate the social principles of our nature, we must mingle with our fellow men ; we must witness their circumstances, hold an intercourse of thought with them, and enter into a sympathizing participation of their joys and their distresses. Such was the conduct of the Author of our religion, the most illustrious model proposed for imitation. He delighted, indeed, in the hour of sacred retirement. But he was no anchorite. He did not seek to please himself alone ; nor turn his back with cold indifference upon a wandering and miserable world, to spend his days in a monastery or a cave of the mountains. No ; he gave much of his time to society. His heart was formed for the most endearing friendship. He disdained not to be one of a wedding party, and to promote, by a miracle, the lovely cheerfulness of the scene. He placed himself, with the most condescending and charming familiarity, in the midst of the people, the low and the poor, as well as the rich and the great ; conversing freely with all, instructing all, and blessing all with his gracious and unwearied beneficence. The grand description of his life was, "that he went about doing good."

And this leads me to the last and greatest evil of excessive reading ; it interferes dreadfully with the discharge of our duties. I lay it down as a maxim, which I think no sound moralist will dispute, that as man is evidently constructed for action, so he is bound to act for the benefit of his fellow men. No mortal is permitted to "live to himself ;" to spend his days without attempting, at least, to be useful to others. In whatever station of life we may be placed, and more especially if talents and leisure are given to us, divine providence opens before us some path of active service, in which we are required, may I not rather say privileged, to advance the great system of human welfare. Many there are who rebel against the injunction, and forego the privilege ; and few more decidedly than the slave of reading. There are wants around him which he ought to relieve ; afflictions which he is loudly called to remove or to console ; noble schemes of utility in hand which he is bound to aid with his most zealous co-operation.

But he cares for none of these things. And what is he doing all this while? Perhaps studying the ancient revolutions of China; or eagerly retracing all the bloody battles which have been fought, from those of "Macedonia's madman," down to the terrible field of Waterloo; or pursuing the endless mazes of the wilderness of romantic poetry. And supposing his studies to be of a better order than these, what advantage do they produce to the world, while he is not "ready to distribute, willing to communicate?" His acquisitions, which might and ought to shed light and warmth around him, are hoarded up, a fruitless treasure, in his own bosom. He plumes himself in the elegance, the dignity, the fancied harmlessness of his favourite pursuits; while, in truth, the guilt and condemnation of the unprofitable servant, who hid his lord's money in the earth, may be gathering heavily over his head. Perhaps,—forgive the conjecture, if it be erroneous,—perhaps, at this very hour, the witchery of perpetual reading seduces one, and another, and another, among those men of large minds and extensive acquirements who ought to be furnishing communications for this Magazine, calculated to enlighten the ignorant, to reclaim the vicious, and to build up the people of God in piety and virtue. Interests of no trifling magnitude depend, in my opinion, upon the merit and success of this monthly publication. And O how willingly would I see this poor quill of mine superseded and laid at rest, by the labours of brethren and friends whom I know to be far better qualified than its master to gain and to reward the public attention!

MELANCTHON.

NOTE.—The remarks of Melancthon are excellent. All the evils which he describes result from excessive reading. It is a great fault, and a great folly; but taking our countrymen at large, not very common. Few, except professional men, among us, have libraries that would furnish separately, a months' reading to a true helluo librorum. We have heard of readers of the Magazine, who scarcely get through its forty-eight pages before the time of publication returns. We wish that our excellent correspondent, whose quill must by no means be laid aside, would furnish a paper for our next No. on the evil of reading too little. We venture to suggest a cause, more efficient than that assigned by him, for the silence of those, who through our pages, might enlighten and rouse the public mind, and improve the public morals; it is the besetting sin of the nation to which we allude, *the love of having.*

- *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Canto the Fourth. By Lord Byron. Philadelphia, M. Thomas. 1818.*

This is the conclusion of a poem which has been some time before the public, and which, says the author in his preface, "is the longest, the most thoughtful and comprehensive of my compositions." We judge from this, that the work is the favorite of his Muse, and certainly with good right to her partial fondness. It is at least the best of his own pieces, and is indeed a production of great poetical power; though we can hardly call it a great poem. In fact from the beginning to the end, it is but a kind of splendid rhapsody of fine descriptions and dazzling images, with strains of eloquent feeling, and reveries of gloomy reflection, always poignant, and frequently sublime.

The first two cantos were devoted chiefly to Spain and Greece, and the third to Flanders and Switzerland. This last is consecrated entirely to Italy;

"A land,
Which *was* the mightiest in its old command,
And *is* the loveliest, and must ever be
The master-mould of Nature's heaven'ly hand,
Wherein were cast the heroic and the free,
The beautiful, the brave—the lords of earth and sea."—(p 24.)

It is in fact a *camera obscura*, or a living picture, of all the most striking scenes and curiosities of that classic country, exhibited by a noble showman, who engages us all the time with his own remarks and reflections upon the views before us. It abounds, of course, with many beauties; though it is still inferior, we think, in poetic spirit at least, to the preceding canto. The flame of passion which often dazzled, and almost consumed us before, is now slowly dying away; though it certainly brightens up upon us at intervals, with some fine flashes of its former spirit. We shall quote a few verses to confirm our remarks.

At the seventy seventh stanza, we have a charming picture of the coming on of a Summer Evening. The description of the Moon as an "island of the blest," is particularly fine; and the comparison of the dying dolphin is at once beautiful and new.

XXVII.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night—
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; Heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colours seems to be

Melted to one vast Iris of the West,
 Where the Day joins the past Eternity ;
 While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
 Floats through the azure air—an island of the blest !

XXVIII.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
 With her o'er half the lovely heaven ; but still
 Yon sunny sea heaves brightly, and remains
 Roll'd o'er the peak of the far Rhætian hill,
 As Day and Night contending were, until
 Nature reclaimed her order :—gently flows
 The deep-dyed Brenta, where their hues instil
 The odorous purple of a new-born rose,
 Which streams upon her stream, and glass'd within it
 glows.

XXIX.

Fill'd with the face of Heaven, which, from afar,
 Comes down upon the waters ; all its hues,
 From the rich sunset to the rising star,
 Their magical variety diffuse :
 And now they change ; a paler shadow strews
 Its mantle o'er the mountains ; parting day
 Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
 With a new colour as it gasps away,
 The last still loveliest, till—'tis gone—and all is gray.

(p. 24-5.)

After this we have a beautiful description of the Egerian valley. The fancies are all elegant, and the full overflowing measure of the verses is finely adapted to the luxury of the scene.

CXV.

Egeria ! sweet creation of some heart
 Which found no mortal resting place so fair
 As thine ideal breast ; whate'er thou art
 Or wert,—a young Aurora of the air,
 The nympholepsy of some fond despair ;
 Or, it might be, a beauty of the earth
 Who found a more than common votary there
 Too much adoring ; whatsoe'er thy birth,
 Thou wyrst a beautiful thought, and softly bodied forth.

CXVI.

The mosses of thy fountain still are sprinkled
 With thine Elysian water-drops ; the face
 Of thy cave-guarded spring, with years unwrinkled,

Reflects the meek-eyed genius of the place,
 Whose green, mild margin now no more erase
 Arts works ; nor must the delicate waters sleep,
 Prisoned in marble, bubbling from the base
 Of the cleft statue, with a gentle leap
 The rill runs o'er ; and round, fern, flowers, and ivy
 creep,

CXVII.

Fantastically tangled ; the green hills
 Are clothed with early blossoms, through the grass
 The quick-eyed lizard rustles, and the bills
 Of summer-birds sing welcome, as ye pass ;
 Flowers fresh in hue, and many in their class,
 Implore the pausing step, and with their dyes
 Dance in the soft breeze in a fairy mass ;
 The sweetness of the violet's deep blue eyes,
 Kiss'd by the breath of heaven, seems coloured by its skies.

[p. 61-2-3.]

We have not leisure to notice all our authors beauties of Rome ; but we are particularly pleased with his warm account of the Apollo Belvidere. The passage is indeed a brilliant piece of poetical idolatry, and worthy of the finest statue in the world.

CLXI.

Or view the Lord of the unerring bow,
 The God of life, and poesy, and light—
 The Sun in human limbs array'd, and brow
 All radiant from his triumph in the fight ;
 The shaft hath just been shot—the arrow bright
 With an immortal's vengeance ; in his eye
 And nostril beautiful disdain, and might,
 And majesty, flash their full lighnings by,
 Developing in that one glance the Deity.

CLXII.

But in his delicate form—a dream of Love,
 Shaped by some solitary nymph whose breast
 Long'd for a deathless lover from above,
 And madden'd in that vision—are express
 All that ideal beauty ever bless'd
 The mind within its most unearthly mood,
 When each conception was a heavenly guest—
 A ray of immortality—and stood
 Star-like, around, until they gathered to a god !

CLXIII.

And if it be Prometheus stole from Heaven
 The fire which we endure, it was repaid
 By him to whom the energy was given
 Which this poetic marble hath array'd
 With an eternal glory—which, if made
 By human hands, is not of human thought;
 And Time himself hath hallowed it, nor laid
 One ringlet in the dust—nor hath it caught
 A tinge of years, but breathes the flame with which 'twas
 wrought.

[p. 81-2.]

The idea in the second of these stanzas, is probably taken from the story of the French maid, who is said to have fallen in love with this “poetic marble,” and become insane with the passion. The anecdote is finely managed in Milman’s prize poem upon the same statue, which we suppose our author has read. But enough of these descriptions.—With regard to the tone of our author’s feelings in this canto, we are glad to observe that they are generally of a softer and more amiable kind than he has lately indulged, though still far enough from the standard of truth. The misanthropy at least is a little qualified, and the melancholy, though still deep, is perhaps less sombre and spleenetic than it was. There is besides, (if we except the doubtful address to Time and Nemesis,) much less of that savage spirit of revenge which coloured so many of his former strains. The following passage, suggested by the tomb of Metella, is a striking specimen of the gloomy sublime.

CIV.

I know not why—but standing thus by thee,
 It seems as if I had thine inmate known,
 Thou tomb! and other days come back on me
 With recollected music, though the tone
 Is changed and solemn, like the cloudy groan
 Of dying thunder on the distant wind;
 Yet could I seat me by this ivied stone
 Till I had bodied forth the heated mind
 Forms from the floating wreck which Ruin leaves behind.

CV.

And from the planks, far shatter’d o’er the rocks,
 Build me a little bark of hope, once more
 To battle with the ocean and the shocks
 Of the loud breakers, and the ceaseless roar

Which rushes on the solitary shore
 Where all lies foundered that was ever dear ;
 But could I gather from the wave-worn store
 Enough for my rude boat, where should I steer ?
 There woos no home, nor hope, nor life, save what is here.

CVI.

Then let the winds howl on ! their harmony
 Shall henceforth be my music, and the night
 The sound shall temper with the owlet's cry,
 As I now hear them, in the fading light
 Dim o'er the bird of darkness' native scite,
 Answering each other on the Palatine,
 With their large eyes, all glistening grey and bright,
 And sailing pinions.—Upon such a shrine
 What are our petty griefs ?—let me not number mine.

[p. 56-7.]

The next strain is of a softer mood, and breathes the very spirit of romance.

CLXXVII.

Oh ! that the desert were my dwelling place,
 With one fair Spirit for my minister,
 That I might all forget the human race,
 And, hating no one, love but only her !
 Ye Elements !—in whose ennobling stir
 I feel myself exalted—Can ye not
 Accord me such a being ! Do I err
 In deeming such inhabit many a spot ?
 Though with them to converse can rarely be our lot.

CLXXVIII.

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
 There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
 There is society where none intrudes,
 By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :
 I love not Man the less, but Nature more,
 From these our interviews, in which I steal
 From all I may be, or have been before,
 To mingle with the Universe, and feel
 What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all conceal.

[p. 88-9.]

With regard to the sentiments, we are pleased to find them rather less questionable than we have usually met with in our

author's pages. It is true we still discover some dark traces of infidelity, which make us shudder while we read ; but the general strain of his reflections is of a better order. There are some of them, indeed, which are even moral in their effect, if not in their design.

CXX.

Alas ! our young affections run to waste,
Or water but the desert ; whence arise
But weeds of dark luxuriance, tares of haste,
Rank at the core, though tempting to the eyes,
Flowers whose wild odours breathe but agonies,
And trees whose gums are poison ; such the plants
Which spring beneath her steps as Passion flies
O'er the world's wilderness, and vainly pants
For some celestial fruits forbidden to our wants.

CXXIV.

We wither from our youth, we gasp away—
Sick—sick ; unfound the boon—unslack'd the thirst,
Though to the last in verge of our decay,
Some phantom lures, such as we sought at first,
But all too late,—so we are doubly curst.
Love, fame, ambition, avarice—'tis the same,
Each idle—and all ill—and none the worst—
For all are meteors with a different name,
And Death the sable smoke where vanishes the flame.

CXXVI.

Our life is a false nature—'tis not in
The harmony of things,—this hard decree
This uneradicable taint of sin,
This boundless Upas, this all-blasting tree,
Whose root is earth, whose leaves and branches be
The skies which rain their plagues on men like dew—
Disease, death, bondage—all the woes we see,
And worse, the woes we see not—which throb through
The immedicable soul with heat-aches ever new.

(p. 64-5-6-7.)

We are sorry to part with our author at this sombre quotation. It is indeed a mournful picture he has drawn of the misery which flows from a life of sinful passion ; and we are sorry to think that he has too probably painted from his

own bosom. But if his soul is "sick," we trust it is not "immedicable." At least we can assure him that there is a *balm in Gilead, there is a Physician there.* We fear he has already found that *there is no peace to the wicked.* We hope he will soon find that the ways of Wisdom are *pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.*

On Self-examination regarding the Dead.

[The following piece, taken from the Edinburg Christian Instructor, is well worthy of a serious perusal. We heartily recommend it to the attention of our Readers.]

FROM THE CHRISTIAN INSTRUCTOR.

ON SELF-EXAMINATION REGARDING THE DEAD.

IN a former number of the Instructor, some remarks were offered "*On Judging of the Dead,*" and the following are humbly submitted, as not altogether unconnected with them on the duty of *examining ourselves regarding the dead.* On all, the judgments and mercies of the Lord are coming down; and for all the ties which join us to others, it becomes us to consider the manner in which we have discharged our several relative duties. It is more especially incumbent on us to examine, when these ties which bind us to duty are broken. Thoughtless of opportunities in which we have not found to do what was good, the deaths which remove opportunities for ever, should not pass unheeded. To ask at heaven, or at hell, for the dead, we are not commanded; but for the evil which we have done them, while they were yet with us, we must render an account, and should even here begin to prepare it. It may be an idle, a presumptuous, or a dangerous curiosity which is vainly anxious to know their unchanging state; but whether they are in happiness or misery, it is worth our while to gather in, and examine, and determine upon the words and deeds which have gone between us and them, and, without recal, have excused or condemned us for the past. It leans to error, to think, and speak, and judge upon the dead who praise not the Lord; but it is the fault of those who are not wholly estranged to religious meditations, and who will therefore the easier suffer the word of exhortation. Now, it looks like contempt of all religion, never seriously to think of death; nor examine regarding the acquaintances and friends who have been removed by it. It betokens no good

and promises ill to discharge our duties to the living, if we shall see them, one by one go down to silence, without inquiring whether we have injured them,—whether we have in any way hindered them from praising the Lord. It is a deadness of natural affection, which is unmoved at the decease of those who were with us in our homes. It is a strength of mind not worth the having, which scorns to admit the sorrows of the last farewell. It is not feeling, to come from the house of mourning and the church-yard mouthing the cold and common thoughts of our mortality. They are not relations, nor friends—we do not ask their esteem, nor affection—who would stand with unaltered look at our death-bed and our tomb : Nor do they look, and feel, and examine like Christians, who are unwilling to consider before hand, how they shall meet with the departed spirits, when to them too, the call of death is, “*Come away.*”

This much has been prefaced, with a view to hint the importance of that self-examination which should take the place of unrequired and unavailing conjectures respecting the spirits which are under the just judgment of the Lord of all the earth. The subject is only one out of many others, upon which we should “assure our hearts before God, who is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things ;” and there is no need for any additional claim to press it on attention. Though the living lay it not to heart, it is entered on the record of the thousand instructions and warnings, “line upon line,” which wing their way, and leave no trace behind. To the house of mourning it may come, and hallow for heaven the sad remembrance ; or, though the heart is yet untouched for them who are not, remind and prepare for the time, when the Lord who gave shall also take away. And surely, there is a place of repentance to them who seek it carefully with tears. Like ties may not in all cases give opportunity of proving the *carefulness of repentance*, but there remaineth the grace of God to them who *do repent*, after a godly sort.—The Lord *knoweth* it and trieth it ; nor shall the living complain who seek him, while he is yet to be found, and call upon him, while he is near.

Bearing these things for encouragement, there should be no hesitation in proceeding to examination, which should go out upon so many relative duties ; and the result of which, ought to have a decided and permanent influence upon future conduct. *The range which should be given to the inquiry, must reach to all the limits where our sins have been.* There are few who die around us with whom we have not less or more had intercourse, and when we know and feel that they

have gone to eternity, it becomes us to consider, whether we have blessed or injured them, now that their day of grace is finished. What has happened to them must happen to us ; and if a retrospect of life can ever assist for the uncertain portion which remains, the retrospect must be more especially useful, when we come to it under the impression, that some who knew us, who resisted or yielded to our influence, have now no share in all that we do, but have answered for the past to the Holy One and the Just.

There is hardly a case which can be imagined that does not urge to serious self-examination. From youth to age many follies have filled up the days ! How many have seen these follies, and have thereby been encouraged to do evil.—Thousands on this side and on that, whom we shall never more see, of whose deaths we shall never hear, have touched at us as they passed through life ; and though it were only for a day, or month, or year, they should have found us *serving the Lord*. The whole tenor of the life should mark us—to the cloud of witnesses in this world also—as the followers of Jesus. That others have been influenced by our transgressions cannot on their part be taken as excuse ; but neither are we excused directly or indirectly we have thinned the disciples of Jesus, and gone with the multitude who fear not the Lord, neither keep his commandments. The most occasional intercourse in schemes which are sinful, should thus lay the foundation of repentance. Our sins extend we hardly know how far ; and if they may be spreading their destructive influence when we are mouldering in the grave, we may well pause on the ravage which death has stopt before our eyes, and repent for the sins “*which are open beforehand, going before to judgment*. While the kingdom of heaven is at hand, it should teach us to beware of the hardening in sins which “*shall follow after*.”

Events, that were fading from remembrance, may be recalled in the decease of some seldom seen, and hardly known, and should teach us our duty, if they were once witnesses or partakers of our sins. They have gone to report us in the presence of our Maker. They may have been privy to much that was wrong, but let not the soul take rest but in repentance ; for the witnesses are before the all-seeing God, and the inmost thoughts are revealed. Honour, and truth, and charity,—something that will never tell in time,—may a while cover the multitude of sins, and make us half forget the omniscience of Heaven’s eye on all the abodes and hearts of men ; but let us never forget it, when from men, our fellows, the evidence is opening against us in the world

of spirits. The schemes which were contrived and executed in secret, are all well known. Motives known to few, are there all counted as they really were. Mingling with the sure knowledge or conjecture of those with whom we acted, when they die, our sins, ever known to God, are even with our fellowmen going beforehand, and recorded to meet us at our coming. And now, when we seldom think, or let the thought affect us, of *Divine omniscience*, let that *world's eye*, which frightens us from Jesus and his cross, bear down from the spirits of men, who look and judge like God upon earth.” “*There is none that doeth good, no not one.*” “*Surely man walketh in a vain shew; his days are less than nothing and vanity.*”

Examination, then, regarding the dead, is by no means narrowed in its range. It extends to the whole tenor of the conduct, and to most occasional intercourse of life ; and let it yet be added, that self examination should come the closer in circumstances *when our character is frequently and decidedly known.* Whatever is the station which we hold, many above us, and below us, and in the same rank, have had an eye on the faithfulness with which we discharge our duties. Though no opinion is expressed, an opinion has been formed. The testimony of our life has not been without its influence. Our sentiments are known, our actions have been witnessed, our conduct in the business, and our demeanour in the interests and amusements of life have been frequently observed and acted on. Now, if by word or deed, we have dissuaded from holiness any of those with whom in divers ways we have mixed and had influence ; when their day of grace is past, we should know that we have shortened it, in that we taught them not by precept, by example, by authority, by persuasion, by all means given us to apply their hearts unto wisdom. Even in light matters the consideration comes home whether we are excused to the departed spirits. In relations, the voice of nature is asking, what means have been left untried, and is willing to condemn all which have failed to keep alive. In friends, the heart is grieving for the kindness which has been unrequited, and is censuring the hasty or ungenerous suspicions, which wore the appearance of cold-trying reserve. In acquaintances, the pale ensigns of the dead are spread over the harshness that was shewn to the living, and the heart is moved to tenderness.—It is not enough that we have *not injured*, we must ask, if we have been *kind*? In enemies, nature is moved. Conscience is forcing up the truths which prepossession and hatred would not before admit ; and in the silence of the last and affecting scene,

the voice of forgiveness goes between the living and the dying.

These feelings are natural, and may often be experienced when there is no abiding sense of religion ; but they are connected with it, and when the heart is alive to serious impressions, there may be that fire from the altar of heaven which should not be quenched. In the feelings which agitate, for the little circle, your earthly hopes, there may be a seeking and a rest only in the thoughts which are “full of immortality.” Shall we see the shroud folded over the dead, and not be struck with the reflection, that the vanities of life are past ? Pleasures, and engagements, and eagerness, and cares, are shrouded for ever, and the living should lay it to heart ! Round the grave where the tribute of respect is paid,—where “dust to dust” is telling how vain was all that was done, remembrance should place before us the share which we have had in the anxieties, and toils, and interests, upon which the grave has closed ! There may be no regrets for injustice or unkindness ; there may be no consciousness of mutual crimes ; there ever must be the contrast of the cheerfulness which was once, and the sadness which is now. For the dead, we think that they should have been impressed with the certainty and near approach of what we are witnessing ; and, as we think for them, we should think for ourselves. We are seriously concluding, that by the dead much would have been unheeded, much relinquished, and much done, had this, their end, only been foreseen. Let us continue the meditation till we know that we were with them in labour, and joy, and confidence of lengthened days ; that, but a little while, the death which came to them seemed to be as near to us ; and that together we smiled by the thought. This, even, without recollection of hand joined to hand in unrighteousness, is a serious consideration. We have marked in their life no glaring sins ; departed joys may be deemed harmless ; and, with all the painful remembrance, there may be no alarm for open disregard of heaven. But together we were going to eternity, which a loved acquaintance has reached ; and who is there who will not have cause to regret, that, on many occasions, they thus and thus accompanied ; and that they now are parted, to meet before the judgment of Christ ?

More serious inquiry still must go through our homes, where affection watches the dying wish, and the last hope looks on in kindness, till it must fall in tears on the cold and senseless clay. The pledged sharers of this life’s hope and comfort,—parents for children, and children for parents,—all of one family who dwell together in unity,—they who best should

love, and most may feel the sorrows of death which compass them, must not deem it unlike to duty or to kindness, that they too are exhorted to examine for the loved and the dead. There is comfort in the Gospel of Jesus, and for one another they should take the words and read them. The attention which soothes, and the griefs which rise are well. *Jesus wept*; but he who was thus touched, and mourned with them who mourned, spoke to *Mary and Martha of faith in God*. The relations of life were appointed for blessing and for duty; and when our pleasing cares and gladdening hopes go down, the reflection of lasting satisfaction is this, that in the homes where we lived, we have humbly studied the well-being of those whom we have followed from our homes to the grave. Soon withered is the bloom and the glory of earth: “All flesh is as grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field.” In the new heavens and in the new earth, dwelleth righteousness,—in that place from which the dead cannot come to us, but we may go to them, is the truest and most abiding hope for them who lived on earth. If it were not so, Jesus would have told us. We labour and we mourn in vain if this is not our trust. Gloomy thoughts must gather round our souls, which shall *not be comforted*, if we will not repent that, in any of the endearing ties of life, we shall have said or wept farewell, without placing our hope in Jesus to meet and part no more. Yes; the shades of grief may be dispelled; the sunshine of our days may yet pour glory down; and, after all, who made us smite our breasts and mourn, *comfort* may grow up. Unheeding that warning mercy which would lead us to repentance, we may forget the home of mourning, the bed of silence, and the word of God, the comfort of Jesus; but we are shrouding our hopes and joys for eternity in the pride of our hearts against redeeming love; and in the determined hour they shall cease to beat, and *lay us with the dead*.

The dead praise not the Lord, “*and after death the judgment*.” As they go in silence, they call upon us to inquire, and make our “peace with God.” This inquiry must go out upon all the life. For those who were near and dear to us of our own kindred; for the friends of our bosoms, with whom we took sweet counsel; for the acquaintances with whom we have associated in the engagements, and pursuits, and amusements of life; for all who should have known our love to God, and our love to them; for the dead, who, from our youth, have seen us, and have known us, or have been partakers in our sins, or have been influenced by our example; let us examine, whether we have in any way hindered them from *praising the Lord*. No voice shall come from the grave.

But if the hearts may be humbly assured before the Lord, if a place of repentance be found while in the land of the living, let us go for mercy; for "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down in silence."

To conclude. These things concern us as we value our own souls. We are not profited though we should gain the whole world in exchange. The dead know this, and teach it. Are they in heaven? *There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.*" Are they in hell? It is like the answer of their prayer for those whom they have left on earth, "*I pray thee therefore,*" "*lest they also come into this place of torment.*" They are deceived if we will not repent, What they would testify, the Spirit of God has declared, and would convince and persuade us, for the eternity to which we are journeying. For those who have gone before,—and for those with whom we live,—and for those who shall follow after,—for our friends and for our brethren's sake,—for all the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living,—this alone is comfort, "*Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.*" What will not help to cherish this comfort, call it what we will, it is an empty name. It will not charm us till the end; we shall loathe it at the last. The practice of the world may not warrant this; profligacy may despise it; gaiety of spirits may overlook it; the strength of conviction may not turn the heart, and the evidence of life may not run against it; but it has the stamp of heaven which shall not come to nought: for "*As the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so the root of the wicked shall be rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust; because they have cast away the law of the Lord of Hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Isreal.*"

G. L. M.

THE EVENING WALK.

PART I.

Mild ev'ning draws her dewy curtains round,
And shuts the rosy portals of the West.
'Tis soothing silence all, a grateful pause
From toil, and turbulence, and anxious care,
Lull'd gently to repose by the deep roar
Of distant thunder from your mass of clouds
Pil'd mountain-high, the remnants of the storm
Long overblown. Mark how the lightning plays,

THE EVENING WALK.

And shows their fleecy sides, at intervals,
 In awful grandeur gleaming from afar ;
 While in her golden chambers Venus lights
 The lamp of meditation, scattering wide
 Her dewy radiance o'er a world at rest.

A tender sadness steals upon the heart
 Compos'd and calm, and points the solemn thought
 To days long past, to many a gentle friend
 And pleasing hour which we no more enjoy ;
 To the fair walks of childhood, fairy fields
 Bright-sparkling through the gathering mist of years ;
 Where novelty and rich variety
 Led rosy health along the smiling paths
 Fring'd with gay flow'rs of innocent delight,
 Nor bade the downy-pinion'd minutes wait
 To pluck their plumes of rapture as they pass'd.
 Thus busy fancy pictures out the scene,
 Till reason frowns, and bids the trifler cease.
 And while he draws a mournful contrast now,
 Tears the thin, glitt'ring veil that wreathes the brow
 Of grandeur, pow'r, and pride, and bids us look
 On sad realities of common life,
 With all it's train of evils, ever prompt
 To blast the buds of pleasure here below,
 And poison all the springs of happiness ;
 Or forward, where our untrod journey lies,
 Through the dark wilderness of future years,
 On sickness, death, and unknown worlds to come
 Beyond the grave, with our reception there.
 Cherish the thought, and into distant worlds
 It's daring pinion urge, and bid it soar
 Above the hills where future ages plume
 Their infant wings. Or, ling'ring nearer home,
 Pursue the exil'd spirit's darksome way.
 Or search the gulph where the revolving years
 Have wrecked their generations as they pass'd.
 And much intelligence is thence deriv'd,
 While revelation pours a steady beam,
 A morn fair dawning on those pathless wilds
 And lands of darkness, never yet explor'd
 By reason's feeble ray, without her aid.

◆◆◆

'Tis from the ~~springs~~ of classic lore we draw
 The stream of knowledge, pouring down the page
 Of history through all succeeding times.

The long-recording muse, with steady hand,
Exhibits there the annals of our race
In dim perspective, through the mist of years,
And speaks the voice of ages past away,
The voice of slumb'ring nations. Solemn sounds
Break forth, as from the caverns of the tomb.
Beneath her magic pencil's ready touch
We trace the march of empire. Crimson lines,
Diverging every way, point out the track
Of war and conquest, till they fade, obscur'd
Amid the solitude of ravag'd plains,
And blaze of cities thund'ring to the ground.

But see the car of vict'ry, from afar
Conspicuous, bears the laurell'd conq'ror home.
Loud acclamations hail the pompous show
Of hostile standards, helmets cleft in twain
Reft of their plumes, pikes, swords, and batter'd mail,
And captives dragg'd in chains. Fame spreads the
sound,
And distant nations tremble at his name ;
While venal poets twine a gorgeous wreath
Of never-fading glory round his brows.
Drunk with the fumes of popular applause,
He grasps a sceptre, and ascends a throne ;
From that high eminence looks proudly down
On all mankind as slaves born for his use,
Objects of cruelty, caprice, and lust,
Fools of ambition, havoc, blood, and spoil ;
Hence spurns the claims of justice, nor regards
The plaintive cries of suff'ring innocence
By fierce oppression's iron talons torn.
He crushes freedom, tames the daring aims,
And bows the stubborn soul of liberty ;
Insulting, plants his heel upon the necks
Of kings dethron'd, and thinks himself a god.
Anon he disappears. Some sly disease,
Long ambush'd in his circling diadem ;
Now strips it off, and bids him go to rest
Low as his meanest slave. Or, from the height
Of tow'ring grandeur, sudden vengeance hurls
The tyrant down, and all his glory fades.
No farther ask—the grave cannot reply.

The angry voice of war is hush'd to rest,
And the fierce clangours of the trumpet cease.

A grateful interval of peace succeeds,
 Sweet as the sunny vales of verdure bloom
 Bosom'd in craggy mountains, or the waste
 Of sandy deserts or temptuous seas.
 The arts revive. The cultivated fields
 Smile to the beams of morn, and pour their fruits
 In rich abundance forth. The vales resound
 With songs of joy. Fair commerce lifts her head,
 And spreads again the long-neglected sail.
 The banish'd muses to their seats return,
 And learning rears again his fallen dome.

And hark what soft, melodious notes ascend
 From the deep covert of yon hazle bank,
 Where lofty poplars weave their whisp'ring shades ;
 Sweet as aerial music from the harp
 Of Fancy, heard upon the distant hills
 When light-wing'd zephyrs brush it's silken chords,
 This is the poet's haunt. Here, all alone,
 He strays, forgetful of the mighty stir
 That agitates the ever-restless world,
 The noise of toil and trade, the bitter strife
 Of jarring int'rests, faction's angry roar,
 And the fierce din of arms, disturb him not ;
 Or if they ask a tear for human wo,
 Break not the charm that holds his soul entranc'd
 In pleasing visions of ideal bliss.
 Again he sings ! Attend the melting strains.
 " Dear Poesy, enraptur'd of thy charms,
 " O may I ever wake to love and thee,
 " From the low, dull pursuits of common life,
 " Through all revolving seasons let me feel
 " Thy cheering ray benign, and ev'ry sun
 " Light us to converse sweet ; whether his beams
 " Play on the crimson curtains of the West,
 " Or gild the mountains with the blaze of morn ;
 " Light up a gem in every damask bud,
 " Or sparkling glance along the drifted snow.

Poor, fond enthusiast ! Soon shalt thou awake
 From these gay dreams ; Soon shall thy tender heart,
 By nature's finest touches tun'd to catch
 The sprightly notes of rapture beating high,
 Or vibrate to the swelling plaints of wo,
 Forget it's throb of transport, still and cold,
 A prey to lothsome reptiles in the dust ;

And all thy dazzling hopes of coming fame,
Or present admiration and applause
Of gaping crowds, as written in the sand,
The silent waves of time will overflow,
Nor leave a trace upon the letter'd shore.

Peace nourishes corruption. Turn your eyes
To yon fair bow'rs where Luxury and Sloth,
On beds of roses, fann'd by fragrant gales
Rich as Arabia breathes from all her fields,
Crown the full bowl and waste their leaden hours
In tasteless joy and languid merriment.
Fled is the manly vigour of the mind,
The eye serene and clear, the ardent glance
Through distant ages, and the gen'rous thought
To give them liberty and make them blest.
Drown'd in debauch, the soldier hears no more
The voice of glory in the tented field ;
Nerveless and weak the arm that wont to wave
The sword in fiery grandeur, when the state
In plaintive accents call'd him to her aid
In vengeance for her wrongs, and bade him hurl
The lightning of his steel upon her foes.
Neglected genius droops ; and poesy,
Forgetful of her dignity, becomes
A parasite, a cringing flatterer,
To soothe a wealthy patron's bloated pride.
The soil is poison'd, and a baneful crop
Of mischief and calamity succeeds.

Offspring of pride, contention, lifts its head
With visage redd'ning into rage, and eyes
That flash resentment at a trivial wrong.
Fierce discord, babbling with a hundred tongues,
Distributes daggers through the madd'ning crowds
Divided into factions. Bursting all
The sacred bands of civil polity,
That held the monster down, a giant fiend,
Ambition, stalks abroad, and blasts the arts
Of peaceful industry, and tramples all
The tender charities of rural life.
The rival chieftains fiercely rush to arms,
And wade through seas of blood to grasp the prize
He holds in view, the purple and the throne.
The state grows frantic, while her children waste
What of their ancient vigour yet remains
In mortal strife, destroying and destroy'd.

The changing scene another aspect wears
Of wild confusion, terror and dismay,
Where from yon wintry hills, the shining bounds
Of ancient empire, must'ring thunder down,
Gloomy and terrible, the fiery Goths.
As mountain-torrents desolate the vales ;
As Hecla, raging mid eternal snow,
Emits a flaming deluge on the plains ;
So these, long nurtur'd in the northern wilds,
And rock'd for ages on the polar storm,
Nerv'd by the rigors of their native clime,
And keen for havoc, spoil, and milder skies,
Horde after horde, descend. The fruitful field
Behind them lies a waste. The hostile shout,
The cries of suff'ring innocence, the groans
Of unavailing courage and despair,
The smoke of rural hamlets, and the blaze
Of gilded cities, tell their dread approach.
~~The haughty state, the fallen mistress once,~~
The pride and admiration of a world,
Lies prostrate, trampled down by barb'rous feet ;
The splendid monuments of arts and arms
By wide-extended ruin swept away.

Thus empire dies. Thus perish mortal things ;
And history is but an epitaph,
Not often honorable to the dead ;
A veil for villainy ; a fond attempt
To wreath the writer's, or his hero's brows
With living laurels, rescued from the grasp
And greedy jaws of all-devouring time.
Be this its meed of praise, all it deserves,
It shows us man in all his various forms,
How vain, yet timid, arrogant, yet weak ;
How cruel, faithless, fierce, abominable,
His stormy passions are ; how small a spark
Kindles him to deeds of frantic rage,
To stab a friend or brother to the heart,
Or desolate a kingdom or a world ;
That vengeance, martial splendour, and renown,
Are wicked, worthless objects of pursuit ; ~~• •~~
That the tall columns human grandeur rears
For pride to perch on, are on quicksands built ;
That sublunary glory is a dream,
Which vanishes when we awake in death ;
That the bright paths of honor terminate
On dying pillows and in dusty graves.

PART II.

Slight not the moral muse, though her sad song
Fall deadly cold upon the ear of mirth,
And chill the bounding pulse of health and joy.
Such various attitudes that pow'r assumes
Which points and leads us downward to the grave ;
So many dangers hang upon the wing
Of ev'ry passing hour ; so thick the veil
Obscurity suspends on things to come ;
So loud the voice that calls us from the skies
In threat'ning thunder ; or in sweeter tones
Of love and mercy woos us to be wise ;
So wide the book of nature lies display'd,
Illegible to none, and ev'ry page
Each fleeting moment, as it turns, inscribes
With lamentation, suff'ring, wo and death ;
'Tis greatly wise to banish levity,
And learn sometimes to think, though serious thought
Be painful ; and while trav'ling here below,
Through these sad climes where toils and sorrows grow,
To gather knowledge from their thorny stems.

How many who, intent on future things
Now chide the minutes ling'ring in their flight ;
Whose eager hopes, impatient of delay,
Would graft new pinions on the winged year ;
Long ere his wings shall flag, may find repose
Low in the silent tomb, and moulder there,
Their hopes, their projects, and themselves forgot.
Should Heav'n unveil the future to our view,
And bid us read the rolls of destiny,
How would the lily droop on many a cheek
Where blossoms now the rose of health and joy.
Beauty would lay her smile and blush aside,
And for a bible, change her flatt'ring glass.
The slave would leap, exulting, soon to 'scape
His galling bondage, and lie down to rest,
Victim of torture and despair no more.
The young and gay, the opulent and vain,
Would break the mazy dance, and for the robe
Of joy and mirth, assume the weeds of wo,
The voice of wailing, for the sprightly harp.
Princes would tremble ; haughty tyrants mourn,
Now mounted high on revolution's wave,
Ambition's tott'ring throne ; the debauchee

Would tear the circling garland from his brows,
Dash the full bowl, and barter oaths for prayers.

Imagination trims his eager wing
For flight excursive to that secret bourn
Where days unnam'd and moments yet to come
Stand ready to depart. Beside them wait
Commission'd ministers of good or ill,
Concomitant upon their hasty march.
Ling'ring reluctant, here and there the forms
Of mortal joys their feeble wings assay,
Unwilling to be gone ; nor fully fledg'd
Till they have paid their transient visit here.
Short are the joys we meet with here below,
Their number small. A favour'd few receive
Their pleasing visits, and they haste away,
While mem'ry tortures us with long regret.
But swarming o'er the visionary plain
Ten thousand hideous forms of misery,
Terror, anxiety, tormenting care,
Heart-rending anguish, horror and remorse,
With all the cruel family of pain,
Unceasing exercise their dreadful pow'rs,
Prelusive to their dark assaults on man.

There disappointment, sullen and severe,
Clouds the young dawn of hope ; distracting care
Blots its sweet beams, and veils them all in night.
Trembling at ev'ry touch, with flowing tears,
There tender sensibility deplores
The wounds of faithful friendship ill repaid
With hanghty scorn, or meek benevolence
With cold neglect or base ingratitude.
There unsuccessful love, with aspect pale,
Droops mournful ; haggard suicide at hand
Points to relief, the pistol or the noose.
There envy learns to pine ; revenge to dye
His hands in midnight murder ; fell remorse
To turn the deadly weapon on himself ;
And slighted conscience barbs her mortal sting
For dying pillows ; stores her quiver there
With arrows dipp'd in sorrow, for the breast
Of persevering, unrepentant guilt.

Nor yet alone the mental world is doom'd
To feel their force ; material nature too

Stands a broad mark obnoxious to their pow'r.
Insidious apoplexy, strong to smite
One fatal blow, no repetition needs.
Fevers with burning cheeks, whose ruthless fangs
Relentless tear the vital chords of life,
Till panting nature bleeds in ev'ry nerve,
Mature their schemes of ruin. Baleful plagues
Clap their dark wings, prepar'd to soar away
And feast on carcases amid the sounds
Of anguish, lamentation, and despair.
Of milder form, not less destructive pow'r,
Are seen the maladies that disarrange
The mental faculties, and often hurl
Their steady ruler, reason, from his throne ;
Pining regret, dejection moping sad
With fancy's dreams turn'd to realities ;
Madness, with vacant stare and laughter loud,
Or terrors and distress : and at his side
Lethargic melancholy yawns supine :
Besides a countless multitude that lurk
Invisible but when they give the blow ,
Accidents, term'd by men, from heat and cold,
Tornado, lightning, earthquake, fire, and flood.
High over all, of aspect terrible,
And arm'd with more extensive ruin, war
And famine grimly wait. A spectre gaunt,
This swallows thousands, yet demanding more :
That, led by vengeance, and desire of fame,
And lawless domination uncontroll'd,
Expands his banner streaming to the winds,
An ensign to the nations from afar
To rush on mutual slaughter : Close behind
In gloomy silence, ghastly, pale, and dark,
A hideous figure, desolation, stalks.

These are thy enemies, poor, feeble man,
Ready to wound thy peace ! As pioneers
Prepar'd to beat all opposition down,
And clear the way the king of terrors treads,
They watch around thy steps from the pale dawn
Of infancy ; through childhood's rosy morn ;
Where hope exulting climbs the hills of youth ;
In the calm walks of manhood's ardent noon ;
And in the pensive eve of life's decline,
When mists and clouds roll on thy setting sun,
And groans are heard, and op'ning graves appear.

Eternal Providence, sole Arbiter,
 When his mysterious wisdom judges meet
 To show aspiring pride it's vanity,
 It's frailty life, impenitence it's doom,
 Or scourge the guilty nations, sends them forth.
 Look in the world abroad, what scenes of wo,
 What sights of horror strike the startled eye ;
 And mark how wide their ravages extend ;
 How secret, yet how certain their approach.

Harass'd by all these evils, what is life
 In all it's flow'r and glory ? Painful dreams,
 Delusions light and vain as fleeting shades,
 Toil, disappointment, terrors, thorny cares,
 And pain, and anguish, are the bitter fruits
 We gather as we tread the mournful road
 That guides us from the cradle to the grave.

In the cold hut where carelessness and obscure,
 Toil combats penury, and hope despair,
 Misfortune's tatter'd victims droop forlorn ;
 The great scarce honour them with their contempt.
 And you, ye sons of opulence and pow'r,
 Upon whose favor'd heads prosperity
 Descends in golden show'rs ; whose varied joys
 Flow in so rapidly they scarcely leave
 A pausing interval to serious thought ;
 Plume not yourselves, nor boast, as permanent,
 The good you now enjoy ; nor mail your breasts
 In cold indiff'rence to another's wo ;
 Nor gratulate yourselves on your escape,
 If yet unwounded by misfortune's shaft.
 Affliction's bitter cup is mixed for all,
 Press'd to all lips, nor yours shall be exempt.
 Does langour never seize the vacant hour,
 And calm reflection whisper all is vain ?
 Does no foreboding dread of future change,
 As angry lightnings from a vernal cloud,
 Break in upon your peace, and blast your joys ?
 Does conscience never thunder in your ears,
 Or lodge her fiery arrows in your heart ?
 Drown not in opiate droughts of mirth and wine
 The friendly premonition. Treasure up
 Its salutary warnings ; summon all
 Your strength to bear, your patience to submit,
 And fortitude to meet the evil day
 Approaching fast, and certain to arrive.

He who has sober judgment to reflect,
 And sensibility to feel, finds little room
 For levity and mirth ; sees little else
 But objects of compassion or disgust
 In all that agitates a restless world,
 In all the motley masquerade of life.
 Here folly and profanity contest
 Vociferation's palm ; there modest worth,
 Neglected, droops in silence. Dullness here
 Rolls on the couch of luxury and wealth ;
 There genius pines, in poverty forlorn.
 Here the light dance evolves its mazy rounds,
 And breathes enchantment through the splendid hall ;
 There love and friendship agonizing bend
 Over the bed of death, and add a sting
 To the last throb expiring nature feels.
 Here trills the sprightly harp ; there rise the sounds
 Of lamentation from the closing tomb.

Flow the loose numbers void of taste or thought,
 Impertinent, an empty waste of words ?
 Do fact and common life refute the strain,
 And brand the sadly-pictur'd page untrue ?
 Let fancy weave the glitt'ring robe of joy,
 Contentment, health, and peace, and bind it round
 A wretched world to hide deformities.
 Let her, with soft, insinuating art,
 Assay with magic pencil to portray
 The harmony and happiness that reign
 Through universal nature ; and persuade,
 And dazzle, and bewilder, and confound.
 Yet grave experience tears the thin disguise,
 And soils her gaudy colours in the dust.

Amid their noise and folly, songs and wine,
 Their sports and trifles, let the giddy sons
 Of dissipation laugh at fear and pain,
 Scoff and deride the moralist, and drown
 His chilling whispers in a peal of mirth.
 But view their end. Attend those mournful hours
 That chain their feeble pow'rs to beds of pain,
 And arm their dying moments with despair.

Among the countless multitudes that fall
 From the bright zenith of a merry life,
 From grandeur's envied summit, from the wings

THE EVENING WALK.

Of hope and expectation soaring high,
 To dust and darkness ; whom shall we select
 In awful illustration of the song ?
 Soon all must tread that path, and each alone,
 That lies through death's cold waste, where gloomy night
 Reigns in eternal silence ; soon lie down
 In long and dreamless slumbers in the tomb,
 Where morning beams no more. Important thought !
 How interesting, yet how little felt,
 How little realiz'd in common life.
 But when disease alarms the flutt'ring pulse,
 And piercing anguish throbs along the veins ;
 When the frail tenement is batter'd sore
 On ev'ry side, and totters to its fall ;
 How the poor tenant, trembling and amaz'd,
 Shrinks from the ruthless storm, and struggles long
 In unavailing combat with the foe,
 How eagerly and anxiously he looks
 To the warm, sunny fields of life and light
 Now fading from his sight ; while awful sounds
 Break from the lonely tomb, and unknown worlds,
 In all their terrors, summon him away.

How deep the anguish, and how keen the pangs
 Of agonizing nature ! What distress
 Express'd in ev'ry ~~feature~~, look and gesture !
 A dagger through the heart were ease to this.
 Is it the pressure of augmented years ?
 Because diseases, by intemp'rance nurs'd,
 Mine in the veins, and sap life's citadel ?
 Because his former friends, unfaithful now,
 Leave him to combat with the foe alone ?
 Because the world, with ebbing life, recedes,
 And all it's tinsel glories fade away ?
 Light were the task to bid a last adieu
 To this vain, transitory, shifting scene ;
 To change this mortal anguish, these deep groans,
 For the long rest and silence of the grave.
 But anxious thought bears not on things like these.
 All heav'n looks down in vengeance from above ;
 From her long slumbers angry conscience rous'd,
 With burning arrows, dipp'd in righteous wrath,
 Exhausts her quiver on the naked soul
 That finds no refuge now. See how it starts
 Back from the precipice where deep below
 Eternity in boundless ocean rolls.

Here let us pause, and in his suff'rings see
 By sad reflection what may soon be ours.
 Do health and active vigour brace our nerves,
 And breathe their purple light upon our cheeks ?
 The fierce disease that tears them all from him
 Gives us a lecture on their permanency.
 Do love and friendship build their downy nest
 In our delighted bosoms ? He had friends,
 And blushing beauty own'd him for her lord.
 Do we presume on late-protracted age,
 And lay our schemes for long-extended years ?
 In his condition view their certainty,
 His hopes and prospects sanguine once as ours.
 With what tenacity he clings to hope
 Wreck'd and in ruins ! With what anxious dread,
 Looks on both worlds, and trembling lingers long
 This side their awful confines. Fierce and foul,
 The spoiler urges on the keen assault,
 Drives from their outposts life and vital warmth,
 Storms nature's walls, and drives her shatter'd troops,
 Retreating, to their citadel, the heart.
 Low in it's socket gleams th' expiring lamp,
 While dismal shades and silence fall around.
 Relentless murd'rer, how thine arrows fall,
 Pointed with pain, and feather'd with distress,
 And wound thy wretched victims ! How thy frowns
 Blast the fair plants of human vanity,
 And tarnish all their glory ! Doleful cries,
 The friend's, the orphan's, and the widow's wail
 Betray thy presence, where thy hand purveys
 For desolation and devouring worms.

Hark, what a shriek of horror and despair !
 Just then the silver chords of life were broke.
 Methought the voice of fiends was heard around
 Exulting in his fate. His final groan
 Death and destruction, with triumphant shout,
 Re-echoed as they bore their prize away.
 Turn from the shocking scene, it rives the heart ;
 Nor be a witness to the laugh of hell.

Shall we seek pleasure here ? Shall we embrace
 The fair, deceitful phantom, slow to learn
 That in her brightest hours she only comes
 Precursor to repentance or regret ?
 Amid her roses lurks the scorpion's sting,

THE EVENING WALK.

And sorrows spring beneath her parting steps.
 With anxious care and labour we pursue
 The beaten track our fathers long have trod.
 Whatever present good the lenient hand
 Of mercy gives, we throw it all aside,
 Still looking forward to a happier land,
 Where hope and golden fancy represent
 Successive joys, in rich variety,
 Through the long round of three score years and ten.
 Death, we admit, is at that journey's end,
 And yet believe it not. Our schemes extend
 Beyond such narrow limits, undefin'd.

Is life a stream ? With what rapidity
 The rough, rude torrent hurries us along,
 Forgetful of its dangers, rocks, and storms,
 And cataracts, and that wide-yawning gulf
 Where ev'ry mariner is wreck'd at last.
 In sportive negligence we sail along,
 And catch the glitt'ring bubbles as they rise,
 Or chase the chaff and feathers floating there.
 Stern reason sleeps, or leaves the mental helm
 To passion and caprice ; their subtle chains
 Twine round the heart, and bind it down to sense.
 In idle dreams thus waste our days away,
 Till death informs us we have dream'd so long.

Blest is the pensive hour of solemn thought
 That presses home these dread realities.
 Blest are the tears of melting sympathy
 That make a brother's suff'rings half our own.
 Blest is the house of mourning ; there we meet
 With angels oft, and tread on holy ground.
 There life, devested of the mask it wears
 While rosy health beats buxom in the veins,
 Fashion's vain trappings, and the cautious veil
 Drawn over deep design, exhibits plain
 It's real character. And while the tears
 Of sympathetic sorrow freely flow
 For others' woes, they fit us for our own.

'Tis in declining autumn's fading gloom
 We calculate the products of the year ;
 And from it's closing scene, whether the parts
 Of life's short tragedy were acted well ;
 Whether descending angels bind a wreath

Of blissful radiance round the victor's head,
 And shout his plaudit as the curtain falls ;
 Or congregated demons, fierce and foul,
 Hiss him away in everlasting shame.
 Hence we infer the transient vanity
 Of all the world pursue as their chief good ;
 How unavailing grandeur, fame, or pow'r,
 Beauty or wit, with pleasure's glittering train,
 To feeble, dying man, at the last hour ;
 When the cold night of death fast closing in
 Excludes terrestrial objects from his view ;
 And life's weak taper, trembling to expire,
 Leaves him bewilder'd, darkling, and alone,
 To cross the confines of an untried world
 Afar beyond the silence of the tomb.

PART III.

Sure there are moments when the mental pow'rs
 Relax, unstrung, and lose their proper tone ;
 When the desponding bosom hardly sighs,
 Yet droops distress'd, scarce conscious of a cause ;
 When all things wear a cold, repulsive gloom,
 Nor beauty charms, nor friendship's accent's soothe.
 He who never felt the melting touch
 Of silent, lonely, musing melancholy,
 The languid pause of thought, when fancy sports
 With visionary pictures wild and sad,
 And wantors, in the luxury of wo ;
 Well may he spurn the humble verse of one :
 Who claims a poet's pleasure, not his praise,
 And pours his plaintive numbers from a heart
 So long to pensive tenderness attun'd
 It seldom vibrates to another key.
 But if a gentle, chosen few indulge
 The deeply tragic though unpolish'd strain.
 Just censure soft'ning with benevolence,
 And pard'ning numerous errors, if the hand
 Of taste and humble genius, such as mine,
 With solitary beauties touch the heart ;
 If they approve, I cannot much regard
 The idle shafts of senseless ridicule,
 Or cold neglect and censure from the crowd,
 Strangers to sober thought and taste correct.

Thus far adventurous has my trembling hand
 Struck from the deep-ton'd chord the notes of woe

THE EVENING WALK.

Beside the bed of death. The parting sounds
 In mournful accents sunk into the grave,
 And night and silence clos'd the awful scene.
 So Iceland winter closes round the bark
 Of poor, lost mariners whose drooping hearts
 And longing eyes greet no returning morn.
 Wilder'd in solemn thought, I linger'd long
 Just on the borders of that dreary land
 The cheerless empire of the dead ; explor'd
 The downward current and the hasty lapse
 Of all terrestrial things ; and saw the foe,
 Cloth'd in his terrors, ravaging around,
 And nature sinking in his cold embrace,
 Defil'd, dishonour'd plunged into the gulf
 Of hopeless ruin. Now emerging glad
 From that cold, shadowy waste to purer skies,
 I tune the harp to more exalted notes,
 And turn to brighter prospects, happier fields,
 Alas but thinly tenanted, where all
 That charms, ennobles, and delights the mind,
 Or soothes the sharp asperities of life ;
 All that supports it in the dread descent
 Down to the dust, and brightens in its close,
 In rich luxuriance breathe immortal sweets ;
 While, over all, religion's glorious ray
 Lures to her native skies and points the way.

Ye chosen few, who walk in wisdom's path,
 Silent yet firm, serenely resolute ;
 Whose best affections, plac'd on things above,
 Stray not in guilty pleasure's flow'ry road ;
 Who, while the million court a fancied good
 Through all the labyrinths of active life,
 Amusements, commerce, politics, and pow'r,
 Ardent, extend your noblest pow'rs to grasp
 No meaner prize than an immortal crown :
 Bear yet a little while the frowns and sneers,
 Sole tribute paid, yet paid with lib'ral hand,
 To meekness, temp'rance, charity, and truth.
 And mark how hastily the foot of time
 Steals on unheeded ; with what frequent dash
 He blots transgressors from the page of life,
 And gives oblivion all but infamy.
 You are but trav'lers in a foreign land,
 Far from your Father's house, and hastening home.
 Though clouds and storms involve the mournful way

In midnight shades, your morn shall break in death.
 Death ! 'Tis a solemn thought to go alone
 Down to the noisome grave ; to tread that path
 Planted with thorny anguish, all obscur'd
 In clouds of terror and uncertainty ;
 To lay these lovely bodies in the dust,
 A prey to greedy worms, and meet a Judge
 Awful in justice, purity, and pow'r.
 Thus with the spoiler parleys conscious guilt,
 Supplies his arms, and points his fiery darts,
 And clothes him in his terrors. Faith in Christ,
 His people's strong and never-failing Friend,
 Dreads not the sting of death, nor feels his pow'r.
 Saints meet him unappall'd ; for them he veils
 His frightful visage in angel's robe.
 They meet him as a messenger of peace,
 Sent in obedience to their Lord's command,
 To lay their feeble bodies safe to rest,
 And bear them to his blissful courts above.
 Kind messenger, he comes to set them free
 From suffering and temptation, fear and pain,
 To dry away their woes, and seal their eyes
 In lasting peace ; nor shall they weep again.

Religion ! Sacred source of pure delight
 And consolation in the dying hour ;
 How does thy heav'nly influence transform
 The tyrant's frown into an angel's smile.
 Beneath thy radiant beams, how mild his look,
 What kind, endearing accents in his voice :
 " Fear not, poor trembler ; your exalted Lord
 " Trod the same road, and mark'd the darksome way
 " With beams of comfort to direct your steps.
 " The cross sustained, your zeal and patience tried,
 " He bids you rise and wear the promised crown,
 " Partaker of his triumph and his throne.

Such is his presence when he comes to wait
 Around the dying pillow of the just,
 Where piety breathes out a peaceful life
 Upon it's Father's bosom. Nature feels
 The pains that wear its feeble springs away ;
 But faith can tread undaunted on the verge
 Of gaping graves, or thence exulting soar
 And rest on things eternal, now her own.

THE EVENING WALK.

Is this the house of mourning ? This the scene
 Which timid mortals tremble to behold ?
 No, 'tis the gate of life ; the shining valves
 Expanding wide to take an exile in ;
 A saint exchanging faith and tatter'd rags
 For robes of light and immortality.
 Hope conquers fear ; his last expiring breath
 Is shouts of vict'ry in the arms of death.
 That gracious hand that led him safely through
 The rugged maze of life, now makes his bed,
 With gentle touch dissolves each tender tie
 That binds to virtuous love and friendship here ;
 Blunts the keen anguish of the parting throb,
 And throws a ray of glory on the tomb.

Ye angel bands, who wait around his bed
 To bear his soul in triumph to the skies,
 Strain high your golden harps. O let me hear,
 If mortal ears can hear, those lofty songs
 That soothe his latest moments, and announce
 His final vict'ry over sin and hell.
 Sing of those wide-extended, blissful fields
 Above the lower world, and far beyond
 The circuit of these heav'ns, where joy and peace
 Bloom in eternal prime ; and waft away
 My thought in ecstacy upon the sound.
 And now he sleeps ; see what a peaceful smile
 Rests on the conq'ror's lips. Fain would we trace
 The spirits airy flight, and catch again
 Those soft, immortal notes, his welcome now
 To lands of light and glory, life and joy.
 But here the veil dividing worlds from worlds,
 Impenetrable, bars out all access.
 So falls the rose in ev'ning's latest sigh,
 It's wither'd foliage scatter'd on the ground,
 It's balmy fragrance wafted to the skies.

From that sad hour when Eden's blissful bow'rs
 By sin, through daring folly introduc'd,
 Were marr'd and ruin'd over all our race
 Death the destroyer reigns. His potent arm
 Successive ages to his dark domains
 Resistless bears along. The sculptur'd stone,
 And plaintive eulogy, awhile repel
 Oblivion's rising waves that darkly flow
 In silence through the vale of years,

And softly cover all ; save here and there,
 Amid the ~~wack~~ of ages past away,
 The mighty deeds of heroes once renown'd
 Stern, patriot virtue, on the daring wing
 Of bard strong-pinion'd struggling with the surge,
 Or feebly glimm'ring from the historic page,
 Bestow what some call immortality,
 Trophies and laurels and undying fame.
 Tell me, ye learn'd I much desire to know
 The full extent and meaning of your terms ;
 What is this boasted immortality,
 Talk'd of so much, so little understood ?
 What profits this possession unpossess'd ?
 Be courteous ; I in turn will then explain
 How much the vernal landscape charms the blind ;
 How thrills the breast of him, who never heard,
 At Handel's strains ; how interesting too
 Your sounding titles, grand parade and noise,
 To putrid carcases and gloomy graves.

Me, quite unequal to the arduous task
 Of trimming sail to fashion's varying gales,
 Unskill'd to catch the rise of fortune's tide,
 Or stem the stormy waves of public life,
 My little bark, safe bound, on shore detains
 In rural ease and peaceful solitude.
 Far from the madding crowds who wander wide
 From wisdom's way in dubious error lost,
 In chase of fancied good, oft real ill,
 I choose to stray alone, deep in the vale
 Where nature's hand o'er all her blooming charms
 Draws a soft, pensive shade, and silence woos
 The soul to meditation and repose.
 Long have I cease'd to sigh for that applause
 Which folly gives to madness, guilt and shame.
 My humble name shall never be enwreath'd
 With laurels nurtur'd in a brother's blood ;
 Nor shall it gather splendour from the flame
 Of battle burning on th' Atlantic wave.
 These I resign to those who barter peace,
 And spurn at life, in prospect of the prize.

More awfnl objects press upon my view,
 And fix my thought on things of more concern.
 Not in the blaze of popular applause,
 The gorgeous pomp of grandeur, pow'r, and pride,

The mines of classic knowledge, nor the stream
 Which active genius draws from science's spring,
 Lies the fair pearl of wisdom. He is wise,
 And he alone, who freights the passing hours
 With humble virtues to be borne to heaven ;
 And waits with patient hope his Lord's command
 To take possession of his sky-built home.
 All else is vanity, a fruitless search
 For sublunary good, that flattering dream
 Which mocks our hope with disappointment's scowl.

Thou Source of real good and boundless joy,
 Attract and fix my wand'ring thought on thee.
 Let my best hopes and warmest passions
 Before thy throne, and centre ever there ;
 My first, great care to know and do thy will,
 And be by thee accepted and approv'd.
 The empty vanities of earth and time
 Teach me to value rightly, and reject.
 Whether in ardent youth, while health and strength
 Flow on in even current through my veins,
 Thy secret hand arrest the vital stream,
 And lead my trembling soul to other worlds ;
 Or whether doom'd to tread the sad descent
 Of cheerless, lonely age ; be thou may stay,
 And guide my doubtful footsteps safely on.
 And when at last my toils and wand'rings end,
 When this poor heart, transpierc'd by many a wound,
 And this frail body languish on the bed
 Of pain and weakness, O forsake me not ;
 But send some pitying angel to conduct
 My weary spirit to the land of rest,

And thou whose sorrows purchas'd all the joys
 Stor'd for thy people in that world to come,
 Be thou my portion there ; and while below,
 Far from thy presence, press upon my thought
 The gath'ring night that waits me in the grave,
 And that great day when from the op'ning heav'ns
 The flaming pomp of judgment shall descend ;
 When the last thunders bursting from the sky
 Shall peal the dirge of a dissolving world.

NOTE.—This poem has lain for some time in the hands of the Editor. And perhaps he owes an apology for its not appearing sooner. The case is then this—Shortly after his labours commenced, he perceived, by some unequivocal symptoms, that *rhymes* in the shape of hymns, odes, sonnets, &c. &c.

were likely to pour in upon him in great numbers. But trifles of this sort are not to his liking; and he is persuaded that the majority of readers are of the same way of feeling. Every author admires the child of his own fancy; and is not at all gratified to find others treating it with contempt. To avoid all disagreeable *scrapes* of this sort, the Editor had determined not to insert any thing in the guise of poetry in the Magazine. It has lately occurred, however, that it might be better to give to any who are endowed with poetical talent an opportunity of presenting the inspirations of their muse to the public, and thus affording a motive to improve to its highest degree, whatever talent they have. One object of our Work is to promote improvement, by offering a vehicle to the writings of ingenious men in our country, and thus inducing them to exercise themselves in various species of composition. In changing our determination, however, respecting poetical pieces; we reserve the right of passing a severe judgment on every thing in this way that may be offered. The hasty and crude effusions of conceited young men; odes to butterflies and to ladies' eyebrows, and fooleries of this sort cannot find a place in our poets' corner.

The *Evening Walk*, although a pretty long perambulation, is presented entire. For this our readers will thank us. We think it worthy of preservation, and of diligent perusal; or we should not have published it. The poem has its faults—but it has predominant beauties. The tone is rather querulous; but there are passages of great solemnity and pathos.

Religious Intelligence. DOMESTIC.

Theological Seminary of the General Assembly.

We are happy to learn from the last Annual Report of the Directors of that institution that its condition is prosperous. The number of students at the date of the last report was forty-three—the number of those now connected with the institution is fifty-one. Since the last report fourteen have been licensed to preach the gospel.

At the close of each of the sessions through the year, the board attended to a careful examination of the students, in which they received entire satisfaction.

The missionary spirit which had previously existed among the students, continues, and increases. Numbers of those who studied in this institution, have, through the last year, been actively engaged on missionary ground, in almost every State and Territory in our country. And great good has resulted from their labours.

Cent Societies, principally female, have contributed upwards of three thousand dollars during the year for the support of poor and pious youth.

A number of valuable books have been presented; a box from a gentleman in Dublin is particularly noticed. Several instances of liberality have been mentioned. One gentleman, John Whitehead, Esq. made a donation of \$3275. The Agents for the Seminary obtained subscriptions on its behalf to the amount of \$31,925 51; and collected of these \$19,356 78.

ANECDOTES.

OF A CHILD ONLY FIVE YEARS OLD.

"One Sabbath afternoon, a little before the school commenced, as I (the Sunday School teacher) was sitting alone in the vestry room, Eliza C—— came up to me, and, with a smile upon her countenance, said 'Sir, shall I read a chapter in the New-Testament to you?' I answered, 'If you please, and I shall be very glad to hear you.' She read the chapter in such a manner, for one of so tender an age, as greatly surprised me. I gave her a penny. After which, I observed her to walk about the room, as if in search of something, and presently came again to me, and enquired, 'Sir, have you not got a money box?' (meaning the Sunday School missionary box.) I replied, 'Yes: it is placed by the window:' pointing to it at the same time with my finger. She ran, got upon a chair, and dropped the penny into the box. When she had so done, I said, 'What have you put the money into the box for?' She instantly replied, 'It is to send somebody to tell the poor people about the great God; and I have got sixpence more at home, if my mother will let me have it.'

At a town in Mass. a little girl, eight years old, was lately sent by her benevolent mother to carry some article of comfort to a poor woman in her neighbourhood, who, although a professor of religion, had long shamefully neglected attending public worship. On seeing the child, the woman said "she had heard that the lady gave Bibles to the poor, and that she wished one might be given to her, for the old one she had, was so worn, she was obliged to *guess it out*." The child returned home, full of earnestness to have a Bible given to the poor woman, stating as a reason, that the woman was obliged to *guess* out the words of the Bible she owned, "And," said the child, "I am afraid, mamma, she does not *guess it right*, for she never goes to meeting!"

OBITUARY NOTICE.—REV. SAMUEL MILLS.

This distinguished Missionary, being one of the agents employed by the American Colonization Society, departed this life June 15, 1818, at sea, on his passage from Africa. This intelligence we understand has been communicated to the Rev. Mr. Mills of Torringford, (Con.) by a letter from Mr. Burgess, the companion in perils of the deceased.